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1. A method of conducting decentralized elections over a wide area network having generally unrestricted access thereto, comprising:
  - electronically transmitting a ballot across the wide area network to a plurality of individual user stations on the wide area network;
  - receiving a digital signature and an associated ballot selection from a voter at each of a plurality of the individual user stations;
  - electronically transmitting the ballot selection and digital signature over the wide area network to a central server on the wide area network;
  - 10 verifying the digital signature at the central server; and
  - tabulating the ballot selection after verifying the digital signature.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
  - providing information relevant to choices on the ballot on remote servers on the wide area network;
  - and
  - 15 providing the voter with access to the relevant information from the individual user station.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein providing the voter with access comprises providing a search tool for user-defined searches of publicly accessible data across the wide area network.
4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising associating the digital signature with demographic information on the voter.
- 20 5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the demographic information is stored on a server remote from the individual user station.
6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising providing personal information in a user-modifiable demographic profiler on the individual user station.
7. The method of Claim 6, further comprising associating the ballot selection with the personal information in the demographic profiler and electronically transmitting the personal information with the ballot selection over the wide area network to the central server.
- 25 8. The method of Claim 1, wherein receiving the digital signature comprises scanning a biometric feature of the voter at the individual user station and digitizing the scanned characteristics of the biometric feature.
9. The method of Claim 1, further comprising providing the voter with results of tabulation of a plurality of previously conducted ballot selections.
- 30 10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
  - composing a poll survey;
  - transmitting the poll survey over the wide area network to the plurality of individual user stations;
  - receiving a completed survey from a user at each of a plurality of the individual user stations;

electronically transmitting the completed survey over the wide area network to a central server on the wide area network; and

tabulating the completed poll survey.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein composing the poll survey is conducted on the individual user station.

12. The method of Claim 10, further comprising:

providing personal information in a user-modifiable demographic profiler on the individual user station;

associating the personal information to the completed survey in a double blind manner; and

10 electronically transmitting the personal information with the completed survey over the wide area network.

13. The method of Claim 6, further comprising compiling demographic reports on the poll results using the person information.

14. The method of Claim 1, further comprising encrypting the digital signature and the associated ballot selection prior to electronically transmitting, and decrypting the digital signature and the associated ballot selection prior to verifying the digital signature.

15. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

composing a petition;

electronically transmitting the petition across the wide area network to the plurality of individual user stations on the wide area network;

receiving a digital signature associated with the petition from a voter at each of a plurality of the individual user stations;

electronically transmitting the digital signature over the wide area network to a central server on the wide area network;

verifying the digital signature at the central server; and

tabulating the digital signature associated with the petition after verifying the digital signature.

16. A method of voting using a wide area network including at least one central server and a plurality of geographically remote individual user stations, comprising:

placing a ballot listing candidate/proposition choices on the wide area network;

30 displaying the ballot to a voter at the individual user stations on the wide area network;

linking the voter to candidate/proposition information stored on remote servers on the wide area network and allowing the voter at each individual user station to review the candidate/proposition information prior to completing the ballot;

35 receiving, at each individual user station, selections made by the voter in completing the ballot of candidates and propositions;

receiving, at each individual user station, a digital signature from the voter;  
 associating the digital signature with the completed ballot selections;  
 transmitting the ballot selections and signature over the wide area network;  
 receiving the ballot selections and signature at the central processor server;  
 verifying the digital signature at the central processor server, including confirming a voting status;  
 recording the verified received ballot selections;  
 tabulating the verified received ballot selections with other verified received ballot selections from  
 other voters at the central processor server; and  
 publishing the tabulated selections.

17. The method of Claim 16, further comprising transmitting a poll to the voter at each of the plurality of individual user stations.

18. The method of Claim 17, wherein the poll is generated on one of the individual user stations.

19. The method of Claim 17, further comprising transmitting a petition to the voter at each of the plurality of individual user stations.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein receiving a digital signature comprises receiving biometric information, the biometric information associated with the voter in a demographic database stored on the central server.

21. A method of conducting a poll over a wide area network, the method comprising:  
 electronically transmitting a polling survey to a plurality of users connected the wide area network;  
 receiving a plurality of electronic responses to the polling survey from the users;  
 associating each response with personal information regarding a corresponding user, the personal information excluding the identity of the corresponding user;  
 tabulating the responses; and  
 generating a demographic report relating the responses to the personal information.

22. The method of Claim 21, wherein the personal information is derived from a pre-existing database and associating each response comprises automatically associating the personal information with the corresponding response.

23. The method of Claim 22, wherein the pre-existing database resides on an individual user station on the wide area network and is at least partially modifiable by the user.

24. The method of Claim 22, wherein  
 the pre-existing database resides on a central server on the wide area network; and  
 associating each response comprises associating identifying information regarding the user with the response at an individual user station on the wide area network, transmitting the response to the central server, and associating the response with the personal information of the corresponding user at the central server.

25. The method of Claim 24, wherein the identifying information comprises a digital signature.
26. The method of Claim 25, wherein the digital signature comprises biometric information.
27. The method of Claim 21, wherein generating the poll is conducted on an individual user station on the wide area network.

- 5 28. A system for decentralized balloting, comprising:
- at least one central server;
  - a plurality of user stations remote from and in communication with the central server across a wide area network, each of the user stations including a biometric digitizing device;
  - 10 a ballot generator transmitting ballots to each of the user stations;
  - a poll generator transmitting polls to selectable user stations;
  - an associator on each of the user stations, the associator associating ballot selections with a digital signature and associating poll responses with the digital signature;
  - a verifier on the central server receiving digital signatures, associated ballot selections and associated poll responses, the verifier verifying the validity of the associated ballot selections and associated poll responses; and
  - a tabulator compiling ballot selections and poll responses from the plurality of user stations.
- 15 29. The system of Claim 28, further comprising a demographic database on the central server, associating the associated ballot selections and the associated poll responses with demographic information by way of the digital signatures;
- 20 30. The system of Claim 28, wherein the wide area network comprises the Internet™.
31. The system of Claim 28, wherein the poll generator resides on each of the user stations.
32. The system of Claim 28, further comprising a demographic profiler on each user station, the demographic profiler storing personal information of a user.
- 25 33. The system of Claim 32, wherein the demographic profiler automatically associates the personal information with outgoing data without associating identifying information.
34. The method of Claim 10, wherein individuals and/or groups may work alone or together in conducting polls, petition drives, town hall sessions, and/or elections using the digital network.

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